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MBCB completes Clinton land purchase

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

The Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) has completed the purchase of 28.16 acres of undeveloped land adjacent to Camp Garaywa in Clinton, according to Jim Futral, MBCB executive director-treasurer.

The land, one of the few remaining undeveloped parcels in that portion of Clinton, appraised for \$760,320, and was purchased for \$600,000, Futral said.

The funds to purchase the site came from the board's operating reserves and will not have an effect on MBCB's day-to-day operations, reported Barri A. Shirley, MBCB associate executive director for resource services.

Shirley said the purchase involved no indebtedness, and MBCB will be listed as the owner on the deed.

"I'm extremely pleased that the board was able to secure the property for 79% of its actual, appraised value," Shirley pointed out.

The land was purchased from siblings Joe T. Dehmer and Diane D. Dinkins, who inherited the land from their father when he passed away.

The convention board was first approached about purchasing the land in the early 1990s, but negotiations failed.

The board was again contacted earlier this year by Dehmer and Dinkins, and shortly afterward authorized Futral to enter into negotiations to purchase the land.

"It was a wonderful day and a positive thing that Mississippi Baptists could acquire the 28 acres of forest land adjacent to Camp Garaywa. For many years now there have been various negotiations and discussions in an attempt to at least acquire a buffer zone to protect the camp and retreat setting that makes Garaywa so special," Futral said.

"During that process, because of the thoughtfulness of the Dehmer and Dinkins families, the convention board was able to acquire acreage that will in time provide great opportunities for Kingdom blessings and potential growth," he added.

No plans have been formulated for use of the land. Shirley pointed out that the timber on the land — a mixture of pine and hardwoods — will serve as a buffer between the 50-year-old Girls in Action state campground and encroaching commercial and residential development.

"Given the rapid development of the property surrounding Camp Garaywa over the last few years, this purchase is really a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity," said Kay Cassibry, executive

director of the Mississippi
Woman's Missionary Union.

"We consider this purchase to be a vote of confidence in the mission of Camp Garaywa, and we are grateful that MBCB has secured the land.

"Whatever purpose the Lord has in store for the future of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and this land, we know Mississippi Baptists will always honor and praise Him with it," Cassibry said.



Aerial view of MBCB land acquisition in Clinton

Missionary nurse gunned down in Lebanon clinic

PORTLAND, Ore. (BP) — Worshipers in two very different parts of the world gathered in churches Nov. 24 to memorialize Bonnie Penner Witherall, 31, the evangelical Christian missionary who was shot to death Nov. 21 in southern Lebanon.

Witherall, 31, and her husband, Gary, attended New Song Community Church in northeast Portland before they moved to the seaport city of Sidon, Lebanon, two years ago. The church supported them financially and on Nov. 24 prayed for Gary Witherall in the wake of his wife's death.

The Witheralls were members of a Baptist congregation in Lebanon, Mieh Mieh Baptist Church in Sidon, and partnered

in missionary efforts with the Christian Missionary and Alliance of Colorado Springs, Co.



U.S. and Lebanese officials have not identified a suspect or released information about what motivated the attack, but investigators believe that Witherall was killed in retaliation for trying to convert Muslims to the Christian faith.

"So many people think my wife's death was a waste... but we believe that coming here with the message of Jesus would never be a waste. It is a message worth laying our lives down for" Gary Witherrall said during a eulogy reported in The Oregonian newspaper.

New Song's pastor, Richard Probasco, encouraged worship-

pers to come to the front of the sanctuary to commit their lives to Jesus Christ in memory of the slain missionary.

"Who wants to come up and say, 'Bonnie's life won't be in vain because I'm willing to do what I need to do to usher in the kingdom of God?'" he asked.

In Lebanon, about 400 people filled a small chapel at the clinic where Witherall helped provide prenatal care to Palestinian women from a nearby refugee camp.

Witherall, who grew up in Vancouver, had just opened the clinic when she answered the door and was shot three times in the head by a lone gunman.

Witherall's death profoundly impacted the Portland community, and *The Oregonian* memorialized her death in an editorial.

In Witherall Wanderings, a newsletter that the couple

mailed to supporters before Bonnie Witherall's death, they wrote about the beginning of Ramadan, Muslims' holy month of fasting, in Lebanon.

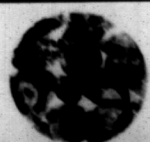
"It is all they have ever known, and they feel that this possibly will give them favor with God," the Witheralls wrote about Muslims who fast each day from sunrise to sunset.

"Pray for us this month that we might be able to communicate the freedom of Christ and the amazing grace of the cross!" they asked in the newsletter.

In Lebanon, Sidon legislator Bahiya Hariri, a sister of Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, and local Christian Maronite clergymen offered condolences to Gary Witherall and stayed for part of the one-hour service, The Oregonian reported.

Witherall will be buried later this week in Lynden, Wash.

WHAT'S IN THE RECORD



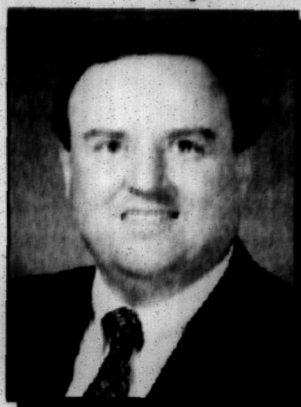
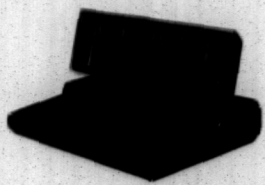
**That all peoples
may know them**

**Week of Prayer for
International Missions
and
International Mission Study
Dec. 1-9, 2002**

Little Moon Christmas Offering
Offering goal: \$125 million

Special Section
inside

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



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Perkins Jr.**
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The imperative of Christians

Bonnie Penner Witherall was murdered last week — executed, actually. She was a Baptist missionary.

Witherall, age 31 and a registered nurse, was appointed to missionary service in Sidon, Lebanon, along with her husband by the Christian and Missionary Alliance (CMA) of Colorado Springs, Colorado. She was a native of Vancouver, Canada.

Witherall was shot three times in the head November 21 by someone who knocked on the door of the building in Sidon that housed both the Unity Center prenatal clinic where she worked and an evangelical Christian church.

There is little doubt why she was targeted. "The killing was the result of a hostile Muslim reaction in Sidon to the preaching and indoctrination lessons the center was giving to Muslim youths," an unidentified Palestinian official told the Jerusalem Post newspaper.

Muslim clerics, inflamed by news that members of Witherall's group had been distributing Christian literature and talking with Muslim young people about Jesus, denounced the clinic and church from the pulpit.

Threats had been made in recent months as tensions rose and the CMA missionaries became involved in a public dispute over their activities.

Sidon's Roman Catholic Archbishop George Kwaite told the New York Times that he had personally warned Witherall of the danger.

"We told her she might be vulnerable to insults or even being hit, and she answered that she would consider it an honor," Kwaite told the Times.

Pierre Francis, pastor of Mieh Mieh Baptist Church in Sidon where the Witheralls were members, wondered in the Times article whether harsh comments in recent months from American evangelical leaders about Muslims and their Prophet Mohammed had contributed to the animosity toward Christians living in Sidon.

"I would not think that this is our calling to say bad things about this religion. They just jeopardize our safety," he told the newspaper.

"So many people think my wife's death was a waste... but we believe that coming here with the message of Jesus would never be a waste. It is a message worth laying our lives down for," Gary Witherall said during a memorial service in Sidon that was reported in Portland's Daily Oregonian newspaper.

The Witheralls lived in the Portland area and attended a community church there before being appointed by CMA.

In Gary Witherall's words lies the imperative of Christians, and certainly Southern Baptists. The message of Christ is indeed worth the laying down of our lives.

Not many American Christians will ever be called upon to die for the Kingdom, but as we enter this Week of Prayer for International Missions and the

emphasis period for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions, let us be aware — very aware — that there are over 5,000 Southern Baptist missionaries who are willing to make the sacrifice that Bonnie Witherall made, if nec-

essary, to bring a lost world to salvation. They deserve our prayer support and our financial support. As we move toward the celebration of our Savior's birth, may Mississippi Baptists overload Heaven with both.



That all peoples may know Him

**Week of Prayer for
International Missions
and
International Mission Study
Dec. 1-8, 2002**

**Lottie Moon Christmas
Offering
Offering goal: \$125 million**

GUEST OPINION:



Seek God's passion

*By Jerry Rankin, president
International Mission Board
Southern Baptist Convention*

The Psalmist captured this passion when God said in Psalm 46:10b, NASB, "I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth." It was reflected in His plea in Isaiah 45:22 (NASB): "Turn to Me, and be saved, all the ends of the earth; For I am God, and there is no other."

Is not that the reason God blesses us as His people? Israel expressed it in Psalm 67:1-2 (NASB): "God be gracious to us and bless us, And cause His face to shine upon us — that Thy way may be known on the earth, Thy salvation among all nations."

Should not God's passion be ours as well? Is anything other than God's glory among the nations not self-centered, self-serving and

unworthy of our life's devotion? His passion for the nations led Him to leave the glories of heaven in order to provide redemption for a lost world. He called Israel to tell of His glory among the nations and has commissioned us to extend the kingdom of God by making disciples of all peoples.

Missions is not driven simply by a burden for a lost world. We will not go to the ends of the earth out of a sense of guilt or obligation because we were commanded to do so. We will be motivated to obedience only when we come into such a relationship with God that we know His heart and share His passion.

The only motivation that will take us on that short-term

volunteer trip, will lead us to become a prayer intercessor for the nations, will empty our purses and pocketbooks in giving generously and will cause us to consider giving our lives in missionary service is a passion for God and His passion for the nations.

Can you not sense God's grief in being deprived of the worship He is due and longs for across the Muslim world? Does He not have a passion for the multitudes of Buddhists striving for their eternal destiny through their own good works, knowing nothing of His provision of redemptive grace?

His passion to reach the Karakalpak in Central Asia, the Tuareg in West Africa and the Yi people of China is what nailed Jesus to the cross and raised Him from the grave. Will we share that passion?

Let us seek God's passion that all peoples may know Him. May we follow in the sacrificial devotion of Lottie Moon and respond to her appeal to give out of the passion that someday soon God will be exalted among all nations.

Muslims recognized, encouraged in China

WESTERN CHINA (BP) — Sitting around the table, the Wong family (not their real name) laughs and talks. They tease each other as their elderly mother brings a dish of noodles from the kitchen. Chopsticks fly, diving into the steaming hot bowl.

Off to the side, smiling and reveling in the joy of children and grandchildren, sits the father of the house. He listens to the chatter as he strokes his long, gray beard. He is blessed to have such a family. All three of his daughters are married, as well as his three sons. All have jobs — hard to come by in this part of China.

The rotund father glances at the clock and rises. He nudges his eldest son and then disappears. The son grabs his hat and rushes out the door.

A few doors away, a young Chinese man steps up to a microphone. He belts out a guttural song much different than the karaoke his peers perform just down the street. It is an Arabic call to prayer.

The freshly scrubbed father appears out of nowhere and turns west with the other old men, facing the very distant city of Mecca. As the last notes of the song disappear, the eldest son enters the mosque to lead hundreds of men in the third prayer of the day.

From all appearances, the Wong family looks like millions of other families in China. But peel back the Chinese appearance, and you find the same Muslim devotion expressed in other parts of the world.

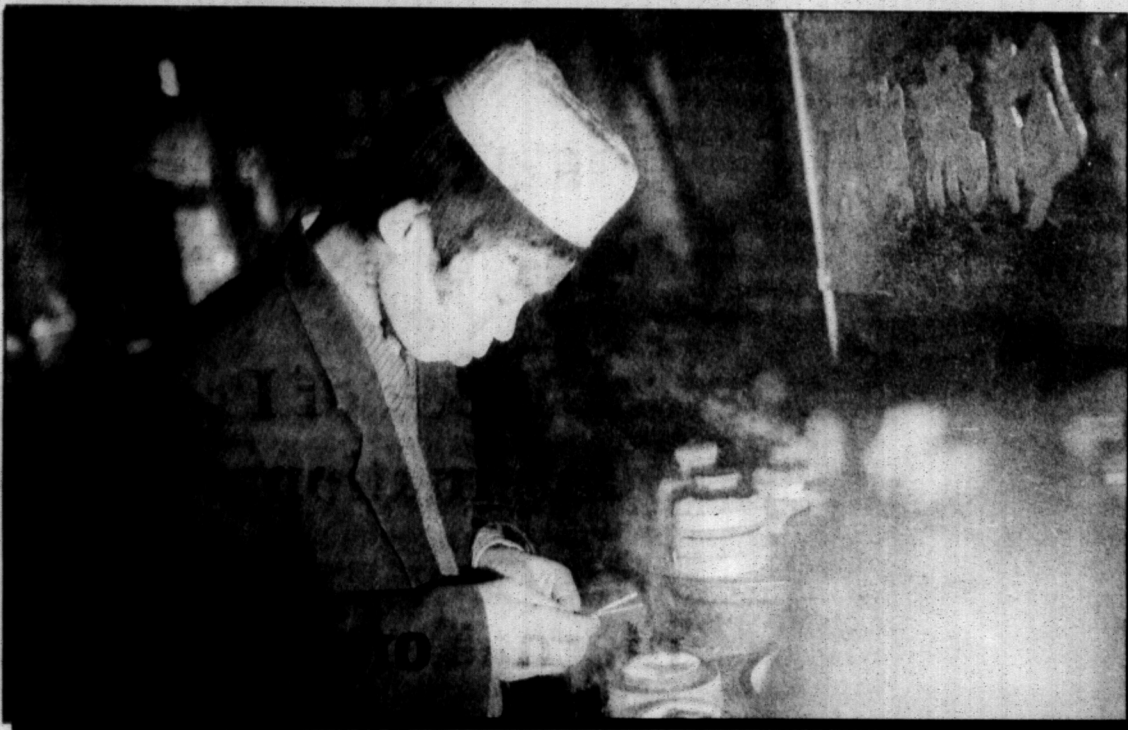
More than 22 million Muslims live in China. The reli-

Despite the lax approach to a usually rigid religion, there is a strong cultural tie to Islam. Christian researchers say this bond is the main barrier keeping Chinese Muslims from coming to Christ. Many bear traditional Muslim names such as Mohammed, Fatima and Mousa.

dren. Now, he spends his time working on eternity. Five times a day he shuffles from his home to pray in the mosque with the other old men, all in hopes of making up for lost time and pleasing Allah.

At home, he pours over books about Islam in his eldest son "Mohammed's" library. The 42-year-old son is an imam at the local mosque. He studied Islam at a university in the Middle East. All he has known is the ways of Islam, and he wants to help others know the way to Allah.

"My father first took me to prayers when I was 10 years old," Mohammed says. "My father taught me about Islam as his father taught him and my grandfather's father taught him.



MUSLIM DEVOTION — Peel back the Chinese appearance, and you'll find Muslims in China have the same devotion expressed by Muslims in other parts of the world. Christian researchers say Chinese Muslims' strong cultural tie to Islam is the main barrier keeping them from coming to Christ. (BP photo)

gion came to this large country more than a thousand years ago through Mongolia, Arabia, Persia and Turkey along the famous Silk Road and spice route. Amazingly, Islam is a recognized religion by the Chinese communist government.

Most Chinese practice Islam in a more relaxed manner than adherents in the Middle East. The Quran is their holy book, but most cannot read the Arabic it is written in. And in several mosques, men and women are allowed to pray together in the same prayer-hall.

Young people marry only within the Muslim community, keeping the family ties to the religion strong. Even the communist government's approach helps strengthen the bond. No one wants to betray his or her religion or minority group.

According to Chinese Muslim culture, true religion is left mainly to the old men and women of the community. Young families, such as Wong's youngest daughter, must first earn a living.

Normally, adults in their 40s, 50s and 60s spend their time praying and following the other rigors of Islam. They learn the Quran at special adult night schools. Most were unable to study Islam as youngsters. Now, children learn the ways of Islam in a six-week course during their summer break from school.

Wong smiles as his son-in-law speaks of being young and his responsibilities. He remembers the years he worked in a factory to provide for his chil-

"We are Chinese, but we are Muslim first," the imam says reaching into his father's desk to pull out a dusty, old book. The rice-paper pages crack and pop ever so slightly as he finds the spot he is looking for.

"Here, this is the Quran handed down from generation to generation in my family," he says proudly. "It is handwritten and more than 500 years old. See? We have been and will always be Muslim."

PRAY

- That God will burden and equip mature, Chinese-speaking Christians to plant rapidly reproducing churches. Ask that He will strengthen new believers among these Muslims, challenging them to serve as missionaries to their own people.

- For God's protection over current Scripture translation efforts and Jesus film production into local languages.

- That God will continue to work miraculously in the hearts of Chinese Muslims. Praise Him for drawing these people to Himself through miracles, His Word and believers.

Looking back

10 years ago

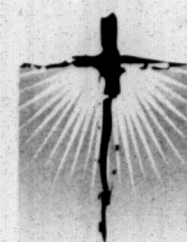
In historic fashion, Louisiana Baptist Convention messengers vote to exclude members of churches sympathetic to homosexuality from participation in key areas of state convention life.

20 years ago

Grady Nutt, a comedian and highly visible Southern Baptist on the rise in the entertainment world, dies in a private plane crash near Cullman, Ala. Nutt is survived by his wife Eleanor and two sons, Perry and Toby.

50 years ago

The State Baptist Music Festival comes to a successful close in the sanctuary of First Church, Jackson, with a sacred concert presented by a 350-voice mass chorus composed of vocal ensembles from every section of the state.



M. I. S. S. I. S. S. I. P. P. I.
BAPTISTS

**THE
SECOND
FRONT PAGE**

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Senate chaplain retires



Ogilvie

WASHINGTON (BP) — U.S. Senate Chaplain Lloyd Ogilvie is leaving his position to be with his seriously ill wife. Ogilvie's retirement will be effective March 15 and will mark the close of eight years as the Senate's 61st chaplain. His decision was made in response to a severe lung ailment afflicting his wife Mary Jane, that resulted in her transfer to a Los Angeles respiratory hospital in October. She has been hospitalized for seven months. After her recovery, the Ogilvies plan to remain in Los Angeles. Before accepting the chaplain's post, Ogilvie, 72, served for more than 22 years as pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Hollywood, Calif. In announcing his departure, Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle, a Democrat, and Republican leader Trent Lott of Mississippi praised Ogilvie's service. Daschle said in a written release Ogilvie has been "a real source of strength and comfort to countless members of the Senate family, from senators to staffers to elevator operators." Ogilvie has been "the watchful shepherd: a man of God ministering to our Senate family," Lott said in a written statement. The Senate chaplain not only is responsible for the opening prayer each day in the chamber, but he provides spiritual care for the senators, their families, and their staffs. Ogilvie leads separate weekly Bible studies for the senators, their spouses, and their staffs. All sessions of the Senate have been opened with prayer for more than 200 years. The first Senate elected its first chaplain in 1789. Ogilvie has written more than 40 books, including *Quiet Moments With God*, a book of his prayers published while he served in the Senate.

Missions Mobilization celebrates volunteers

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

Supporters of Mississippi Baptist volunteer missions efforts gathered November 15-16 to recognize the volunteers behind the missions and prepare for future endeavors.

While 2002 was technically the first Missions Mobilization Celebration, the event was previously known at the Partnership Missions Celebration.

The Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Partnership Missions Department changed its name earlier this year to the Missions Mobilization Department (MMD).

Ken Rhodes remained as director of the newly-named department — and the department's mission also remained the same.

Ann Stone, a member of Mantee Church, Mantee, was chosen as Mississippi Baptist Volunteer of the Year.

Banquet goers were also treated to testimonies from a number of Mississippi Baptists who have completed volunteer mission trips, including:

- Buddy and Mary Keel, members of Heritage Church, Lucedale, who volunteered in Kenya.

- Clay Leavell, pastor of New Hope Church in Greene Association, and his wife Jennifer, both of whom volunteered in an unreached city that was unidentified in order to protect ministries located there.

Ray and Fay Huff, members of New Zion Church, Crystal Springs, who volunteered in an unreached city.

- Ron Holmes, youth minister at First Church, Louisville, who led a youth mission team to Ukraine.

- Clark and Valerie Rumpfelt, who will be leaving in January to enter missions service in Toronto, Canada.

The group also heard taped reports from Jimmie Wood of First Church, Pearl, who is serving as the interim director of missions for the entire state of Maine; and Bob Sanderson of

Waynesboro, who is serving as interim pastor of Tolland Church in Connecticut.

Rhodes and Karen Ivy, Baptist Student Union director at Holmes Community College in Goodman, served as co-hosts of the banquet program.



MISSIONARY TO MISSIONARY — Nan Sugg (right) missionary-in-residence along with her husband Rob at First Church, Jackson, discusses missions with retired Southern Baptist missionary Yvonne Bruce of Dallas. Bruce was the keynote speaker at the November 15 Missions Mobilization Celebration Banquet at First Church, Jackson. (BR photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)



MOBILIZING TO WITNESS

— Ray Huff (second from left) listens as his wife Fay (second from right) describes their recent volunteer mission trip to an unreached city. The Huffs spoke at the 2002 Missions Mobilization Celebration Banquet, held November 15 at First Church, Jackson. Looking on are banquet co-hosts Karen Ivy (left), Baptist Student Union director at Holmes Community College in Goodman, and Ken Rhodes, missions mobilization director for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board in Jackson. (BR photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

"Our message is that anyone can go anywhere, anytime, for volunteer missions," Rhodes said.

"The Celebration was very upbeat; everybody is ready to go," he added.

Conferences in the Baptist Building in Jackson on November 16 included:

- Ukraine volunteer missions led by Thomas and June Nolen, former fieldside coordinators of the Mississippi/Ukraine Baptist Partnership Mission Project.

- North America volunteer missions led by Paul Harrell, MMD contract consultant for the Maryland/Delaware partnership; and Ken Lyle, MMD contract consultant for Impact Northeast ministry.

- Mississippi strategies of mobilization, led by Rhodes.

The day began with a continental breakfast and a devotion by Jimmy Albritton of Picayune, retired former pastor of First Church, Zorr, La.

Testimonies included Ray and Pat Spence, members of Union Church, Picayune, who volunteered in an unreached city; and Hal Bates, pastor of Collinsville Church, Collinsville, who will travel to Toronto, Canada, on an upcoming volunteer mission trip.

On the evening of November 15, a special banquet was held in Fellowship Hall West of First Church, Jackson, to recognize Mississippi Baptist missions volunteers.

Yvonne Bruce of Dallas, a retired International Mission Board missionary who is now involved in volunteer missions, was the keynote speaker.

She described the excitement surrounding a volunteer missions effort in which she is currently involved that is making impressive inroads with an unreached people group.

Bruce's husband Joe is partnership missions coordinator for the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

SBC President Graham presses plea for Christian 'Kingdom schools'

PENSACOLA, Fla. (BP) — Carefully suggesting a less "legalistic" approach to education, Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) President Jack Graham said Southern Baptists can make a difference at all levels of education, not just at the college and seminary level.

"The world is too much with us and so, while we are not trying to cocoon our children, we don't want to put our children in a position to fail," Graham said in a Nov. 11 interview with the Florida Baptist Witness, "and I think Christian schools put children in a position to succeed spiritually."

Graham is pastor of Dallas-area Prestonwood Church in Plano, and is serving his first term as SBC president.

He first issued a call for planting new "Kingdom schools" during an address to the SBC Executive Committee Sept. 16 in Nashville, Tenn. He said his call for churches and associations to establish Christian schools is, in part, a response to the Empowering Kingdom Growth (EKG) initiative approved by messengers to the 2002 SBC annual meeting in St. Louis.

"Kingdom schools are not a reaction to public schools," Graham said in the interview. Instead, he emphasized that the choice of public education, Christian education or homeschooling should be a "mat-

ter of prayer" for each parent "as it fits the need and the place in life for that child."

"There are many wonderful public school teachers and coaches," said Graham, voicing support for what Southern Baptists can do to help equip them to be "salt and light."

On the other hand, Graham said it is wrong to believe that creating Christian schools will remove believers from the public arena. "You know we need to be careful with that argument because our kids, whether they are in Christian schools or in public schools, they see plenty of the world," Graham said. "I'm not in a position to mandate. I'm just suggesting that Southern Baptists look more seriously and more aggressively at establishing these schools."

In looking at whether the creation of Christian schools might serve a need in the culture at a time when there is a shortage of teachers and classroom space, Graham said, "Absolutely."

"That's the whole purpose. To train a new generation of leaders to make a difference... To develop a new generation of young dynamic leaders who understand their faith, who are able to communicate their faith and to live their faith in whatever their career or calling may be," Graham said.

Christian singer Bebo Norman 'not typical' |

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Bebo Norman is not your typical Christian artist. He's a guy who might be more prone to talk rather than sing at his concerts.

Norman goes beyond the superficiality of the industry and is not afraid to go beyond the basics of Christianity -- as so many modern Christian pop-artists have a reputation of doing. In a music market where the success of an artist is often measured in the number of different names of God he or she can reference in a song, Bebo has dared to plunge into a world of unanswered questions and awareness of who and what God really is.

From Norman's beginnings with his first independent project The Fabric of Verse, he managed to sell more than 45,000 copies, one of which landed into the hands of Caedmon's Call. As a result, Caedmon's Call extended Norman an invitation to join their next road trip.

He was the first artist to sign onto Watershed Records, started by Cliff Young, Caedmon's founder and the son of Ed Young, pastor of Second Church, Houston.

Norman's latest release, *Myself When I Am Real*, was released on Essential Records.

After releasing a more pop-dominated *Big Blue Sky* as compared to the soft and folk-influenced debut of *Ten Thousand Days*, many of his fans wondered what path he would take on his latest project. *Myself When I Am Real* blends both styles into a creation that proves Norman's talent as a musician.

"This project is a medium between my last two albums," Bebo said in a press release. "Musically, *Big Blue Sky*

stretched me in healthy ways that were outside my limits, but now I've sprung back and landed in a place where I feel like an adult as a songwriter.

"These new songs express the things I want to share more than ever. My goal with this album has been to portray myself as accurately as possible."

There is nothing out of the ordinary that will surprise listeners, and, if they like his original work, they should be pleased. Norman's infectious melodies and choruses have never been better, instantly catching my attention and holding it to the last note. Songs such as *Falling Down* and *Our Mystery* are prime examples of Norman's increased songwriting abilities.

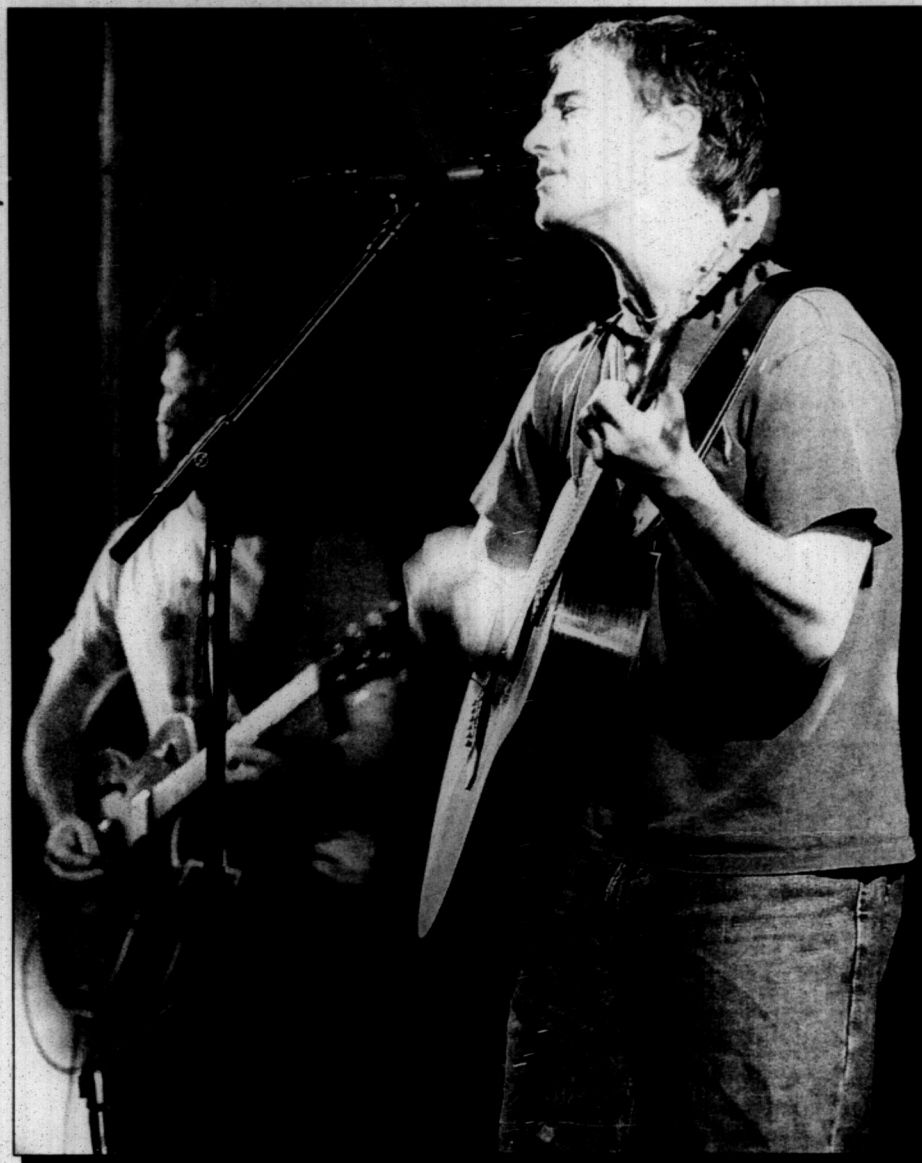
The technicality of *Myself When I Am Real* is yet another factor that makes the project a success.

Ed Cash, the producer of all three Norman releases and his longtime friend, does a wonderful job of providing soft and underlying accompaniment, which included guitars, cello, and simple percussion, without overproducing anything.

Summing up the project, Norman said, "I feel like I've landed in a good place musically on this record, partly because I think I've grown up a little as a songwriter, and the production represents that."

"We left a good deal of space in the songs, which lends itself to my acoustic background, but I don't think we sacrificed the fullness that production can and does bring to a record."

"To me it's a perfect balance of where I've come from and where I am," he said.



Norman

HANDLING HOSTILITY

In November, 2002, the results of a study were released showing what we probably suspected and maybe already knew — that anger kills! I'm not talking about getting angry, taking a gun, and shooting someone. I'm not talking about getting angry, jumping in your car, and using it as a lethal weapon to run over somebody or something. No, the study focused on what anger does to the person who is angry. Hostility — boiling, seething, stewing, ongoing anger can kill the person who carries it around with them.

The study focused particularly on what hostility does to the heart. It revealed that people who stay upset all the time are far more likely to have a heart attack than the person who remains calm. Some people stay ruffled up about everything: traffic, weather, a tree being cut down, a tree being planted that blocked their view, the temperature in the office, a fellow-worker not carrying their share of the load, a raw deal in a business venture, a statement by a politician, a companion that is late, coffee that is too strong, or a child crying at church. All of these and a hundred more things can set them off and create a slow burn that may last for hours or days.

Of course, pre-moderns, or post-moderns, or neo-moderns, or mo-moderns have got to reinvent the wheel, study



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

something to death, and ignore the wisdom of the ages. It is clear that for all of history anger has been a part of society. It is the part of the fabric of who we are as human beings. It is a part of God-created nature. Created in the image of God, we, like Him, are able to have and express anger, but we tend to pay little attention to His guidelines concerning anger.

Long before any study was ever done, God knew that anger would kill. The first murder ever recorded was done out of anger, one brother for another, and the ugly work of hostility was begun. The study suggested that people need to get a grip on their anger in order to save their hearts and indeed, save their lives. While many places in the Bible speak to the control of our anger, the Proverbs are just filled with thoughts that directly touch what and why we need to do something. In Proverbs 16:32, the Scripture says, "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh the city."

So, what can we do? How can we go about getting a handle on hostility? Let me offer three words that may help:

• **Resistance.** It is important for each of us to realize that we don't have to give in to anger and go where it would take us. The Apostle Paul writes in Colossians 3:8, "But now ye also put off all these: anger, wrath, malice..." and in Ephesians 4:31, he says, "Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor and evil speaking be put away from you."

I suppose for everyone the course leads to the same conclusion — that if we give in to anger one step, then another step, and then another step, at some point it always ends up out of control. God would have us be in control of our spirits and in control of our actions and reactions. We must resist turning over the reigns of what we do and who we are to our hostility.

• **Balance.** I think it is important for us to realize that anger is a good thing and a bad thing. It is keeping our hot emotions in balance that enables us to be our best. For example: somebody

does something that enrages you and you only have a split second to respond, act, or help or it will be too late. On the other hand, there are things that take place that you need to pause and reflect on, count to 10, then maybe count to a 100, and then maybe count to a 1,000, and then you might realize you ought to stop counting and do nothing.

Sometimes we act and over-react and do more damage than was already done. It calls for balance — moment by moment and day by day. It calls for balance for us to understand what is essential and what is just a passing irritant. No doubt there are thousands of people sitting in prisons today who, if they could have thought through the moment, would have come up with a different decision, a different direction, and a different future.

While you may not be going to prison, you may be putting your own heart in jeopardy.

• **Reliance.** Only God can help us deal with this wild emotion that rears its head in our hearts. Paul says in Ephesians 4:26, "Be ye angry and sin not. Let not the sun go down on your wrath." While we may need to get a grip on our anger and not let it carry over from one day to the next and from one experience to the next, reality is that we cannot deal with it or move forward without the grace of God.

He alone can control us, cool us, use us, and we must lean on Him.

Biblical City set for Dec. 5-7

The sixth annual Biblical City at the Pittsboro AgriCenter in Calhoun County will be held on the evenings of December 5-7.

Visitors to Biblical City, which is sponsored by Calhoun County's Christian churches and civic organizations, will walk through 70 scenes of a community in the time of Jesus Christ, culminating in His crucifixion and resurrection. Event organizers estimated that more than 10,000 people attended last year's Biblical City.

There is no admission charge, but donations are accepted. Gates open at 6 p.m. and close at 8:30 p.m. each night. Biblical City is held indoors and is handicapped-accessible. A shuttle bus will also be provided.

Groups planning on bringing busloads and those needing additional information are encouraged to call the Calhoun City Chamber of Commerce at (662) 628-6990 or (662) 637-2257.

JUST FOR THE RECORD

The **GAs of Ellistown Church, Blue Springs**, collected aluminum cans throughout the year to be recycled. With the money earned and the help of other church members, 383 items were sent to missionary Doug Chanco to use with the Seaman's Ministry in Savannah, Ga.



GAs of Ellistown Church, Blue Springs

Lakeshore Church, Jackson, will hold a Live Drive-Thru Nativity Dec. 19-21 from 6:30-8:30 p.m. on Thursday, 6:30-9 p.m. on Friday, and 6-9 p.m. on Saturday. Admission is free and all are invited.

Algoma Church, Algoma, will hold a Drive-Thru Nativity of five well-known scenes portraying Jesus' birth on Dec. 20 and 21 from 6-9:30 p.m., rain or shine. Admission is free.

Palestine Church, Harrisville, recently honored their senior citizens with a special program and dinner. Pictured (from left) are Irene Hales, Jamie Bowering, Pernecie Welch, and Miriam Matthews.

The senior adult choir of **First Church, Calhoun City**, will perform Let Earth Receive Her King on Dec. 1 at 6:30 p.m. The

Praise Team and Children's Choir will perform Dec. 8 at 11 a.m. and The Engells will Present Carols by Candlelight at 6:30 p.m.



Williams

First Church, Gautier, will honor **Billy R. Williams**, pastor, and his wife **Rebecca**, with a retirement reception on Dec. 22 from

2-4 p.m. They will reside in Jackson.

BAPTIST COLLEGE NEWS

The **Mississippi College Naturals** will present Christmas with the Naturals Dec. 5-7. The program will be held in Anderson Hall, B.C. Rogers Student Center, MC, Clinton. The program will include traditional holiday favorites such as Winter Wonderland, White Christmas, an audience Carol-Sing, and will close with a not-so traditional arrangement of the Hallelujah Chorus from Handel's Messiah.

For more information regarding tickets for the dinner and show, or the Festival of Lights, call (601) 925-3856.

The **Mississippi College Baptist Student Union** will host the Lighting of the Quad on Dec. 3 at 6:45 p.m. Each person will be able to participate in a special candle-lighting. The celebration will include a reading of the Christmas Story, drama from Cross Section, music from the

Gospel Choir, and caroling. Hot chocolate will be served.

Tom McLaughlin has served as Baptist Student Union Director at Mid-Delta Community College since 1981 and will be moving to Northwest Community College to serve as BSU Director effective in January. Mid-Delta Association will honor McLaughlin with a reception at the BSU on the MDCC campus Dec. 8 from 2:30-4 p.m. Friends and students are encouraged to write letters for a remembrance book. Mail letters to Nancy Parker, P.O. Box 48, Sunflower, Miss. 38778, by Dec. 2.

The **Mississippi College Department of Music** will hold the Festival of Lights on Dec. 5-7. The program begins at 7:30 p.m. in Provine Chapel, MC, Clinton. Tickets can be purchased at the door, or by calling the Music Office at (601) 925-3440.



Mississippi College Naturals



Senior Citizens of Palestine Church, Harrisville

Highland Church, Meridian, will hold their Singing Christmas Tree Dec. 5 and 6 at 7 p.m., and Dec. 7 and 8 at both 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. For tickets, call (601) 482-0191.

Holly Springs Church, Foxworth, will hold Hanging of the Green on Dec. 1 at 11 a.m. Sunday School will be at 10 a.m. and the nursery is provided. The Youth-Collegiate Choir will be presenting The Noise We Make, drama and musical, on Dec. 1 at 6 p.m. A fellowship will follow.



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

Transforming Tragedy into a Legacy

God's word instructs us to excel in the grace of giving. Carl and Doris Dew are truly examples of this grace. When their son Paul was killed in an accident, the Dews wanted to honor their son's memory and help meet the needs of their home church, Highland Baptist in Vicksburg. Their pastor, Brian Ivey, directed them to the Mississippi Baptist Foundation.



By establishing the Paul Dew Memorial Trust with the Foundation, their pastor knew the Dews' wishes would be fulfilled. They transformed a tragedy into a trust that will glorify God by providing for His work. With scholarship funds for Highland Baptist students, funding for missions and even income going to the church, Paul Dew's memory continues and impacts many, even beyond his lifetime.

God was able to work even through Paul's death. Because of the grace of Carl and Doris' gift and the forethought of their pastor, this gift will strengthen and support the individuals and the ministries of Highland Baptist Church for years to come.

MBF

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